

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

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S/S-O:DLMACK

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P 172352Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 038088

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT MUNICH 396 ACTION SECSTATE 17 FEB

QUOTE

CONFIDENTIAL MUNICH 0396

EXDIS

FOR EUR - ARMITAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN

SUBJECT: RESIGNATION OF RFE ACTING DIRECTOR

1. RFE/RL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SCOTT AND ACTING DIRECTOR COOK HAVE INDICATED TO CONGEN SEPARATELY AND IN CONFIDENCE THAT COOK HAS RESIGNED EFFECTIVE MARCH 5 OR 6.

2. COOK'S RESIGNATION WAS TRIGGERED BY HEATED ARGUMENT HE HAD WITH RFE DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE HEMSING FEBRUARY 14 CONCERNING FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS REGARDING RFE'S MISSION AND RELATIONSHIP TO EASTERN EUROPEAN AUDIENCES AND REGIMES.

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3. HEMSING IS NOW SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN MUNICH MARCH 7

AND BEGIN WORK MARCH 8. COOK HAS BEEN SUPERVISING ALL RFE BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT VIRTUALLY ALONE SINCE RALPH WALTER'S TRANSFER LAST FALL. WITHOUT COOK, HEMSING, WHO IS NOT RPT NOT YET EXPERIENCED IN EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, WILL PRESUMABLY BE COMPELLED TO RELY INITIALLY ON SOMEONE FROM RFE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT AS HIS ASSISTANT. OTHERWISE HEMSING WILL FACE VERY DIFFICULT TRANSITION PERIOD.

4. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT COOK, WHO IS LOYAL TO THE INSTITUTION RFE, IS SEEKING TO AVOID PUBLICITY, WHICH MIGHT AFFECT RADIO ADVERSELY. ALTHOUGH RFE WOULD PREFER TO REFRAIN FROM EARLY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COOK'S DECISION, RUMOR OF IT IS SPREADING THROUGHOUT RFE AND MAY REACH THE PRESS IN SHORT ORDER. PETERSON UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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NNN

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